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REPORT NO. R-43-53

WDSS INTELLIGENCE REPORT

COLLECTOR: Japan

SUBJECT: (Prince) HIGASHIKUNI's Views on Rearmament

I. D. NO. 1173562

FROM: OAR/IA Japan

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INCL: PREPAID BY: W. T. RIDER, Col., GS

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SUMMARY OR SID REPORT:

This report gives the views on Japanese rearmament expressed by (Prince) Naruhiko HIGASHIKUNI, ex-General and Prime Minister, during a personal interview. HIGASHIKUNI stated that he believed in a "gradual" approach to rearmament; that the attitudes of countries neighboring Japan and the antipathy of Japanese women and young men to the military, mitigated against any immediate open government action in this direction. He advocated that U.S. leaders at home and Japan refrain from open pressures on the Japanese to rearm and in Japan "work through" the older Japanese to bring about the proper atmosphere for self defense. The report also contains personal observations of HIGASHIKUNI.

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1. Background.

- a. On 4 May 1953 the Reporting Officer had a two hour informal meeting with Maruhiko HIGASHIKUNI, former General of the Army and Prime Minister of Japan.
 - b. The interview was arranged through a Mr. Nobuhiko JIMBO, an ex-Army Colonel, whom the Reporting Officer had befriended during the Occupation. JIMBO and his secretary were present during the interview and the latter acted as interpreter.
 - c. Biographical data on HIGASHIKUNI is contained in Japer's R-42-53.

2. In response to queries, HIGASHIKUNI expressed the following views on Japanese recruitment:

- a. Japan must proceed slowly because external and internal conditions mitigate against an early resurgence of Japanese military power. The attitude of "gradual approach" adopted by Prime Minister UCHIDA is best from a political, psychological, and economic point of view. This was reflected in the last election in which those candidates advocating a speedier recovery were soundly defeated.

The major developing countries have obligations held by neighboring countries to meet their obligations. These include the obligation to provide aid and assistance and the obligation to provide for the welfare of their citizens. The major developing countries have obligations to meet their obligations. These include the obligation to provide aid and assistance and the obligation to provide for the welfare of their citizens.

- e. Major internal factors
the negative attitude of women
towards equipping properly a real
and effective self defense system
and the lack of any serious organiza-
tion to support it.

Japan Germany's switch created similar
fear & aid in developing a mutual defense
pact presented in asia. Despite that
others toward a collective effort.
What the U.S. could do to help Japan with

- The U₃S₂ must contain a minimum of 90% U₃S₂.

- b. The U.S. should lend its good offices to conclude an ~~immediate~~
mutual defense pact for Asian countries and in this form help to ease the sit-
uations of Australia, New Zealand, and the Philippines.

- c. U. S. leaders at home should now openly exert pressures on Japan to restrain by public statement, and representatives here should work through the proper Japanese leaders and organizations to help bring about a change of spirit of the people. When asked to identify certain of the individuals and organizations to which he made reference, HIGASHIKIYU stated he would do so at a later date.

- d. The U.S. should strive to encourage and facilitate Japan's trade with Southeast Asian countries.

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4. The interview closed with reassurances on the part of both members that all statements made reflected purely personal views, and HIGASHIKUNI stated that he would be glad to hold another discussion a few weeks after a new government had been formed.

5. HIGASHIKUNI's physical appearance belies his age of 65. He is of slight stature and build (about 5 ft. 2 inches - 120 lbs), dapper appearance, conservative dress, and a quick but precise manner of speaking. Although affable in behavior and conversation, he creates the definite feeling that he feels socially and intellectually superior to those about him. He spoke in a patronizing way of Maeda Shigamitsu and Ogata, who formerly were members of his cabinet and are now head of the Progressive Party and Secretary of the Liberal Party respectively. He implies that he is still a power within political circles and can arrange meetings with his former subordinates as desired. He gives the impression of being a very forceful character who is used to having people obey his direction. It appears that he would command the respect and deference of his colleagues and subordinates by virtue of his intellectual capacity, acquired honors and recognitions, and aloof manners. While he does not appear to be a brusque, aggressive individual given to table pounding and shouting to achieve his ends, he obviously achieves effective results by inspiring a cold fear in those under him. He is logical and consistent in his ideas and repetitions, though volatile in expression. Certainly he is not a gregarious or highly social individual and when he converses with others it is only to express his purposes to speak French fluently and understand and speak English a little. Though he did not use English in his conversation, he did make the proper English corrections when he wanted to be certain that the Reporting Officer conveyed an exact meaning and also he appeared to understand most of what the Reporting Officer said in English. In general, his physical condition may be classed as excellent; his character is forceful and determined, and his personality as direct and intelligent.

COMMENTS:

1. As can be seen from his biography, HIGASHIKUNI had extensive experience and acquaintance in military, political, and nobility circles. He is supposed to have helped the power build-up on the part of the military during the assumption of the Prime Ministership by Imperial order at Yamagata. His predecessor, the Emperor himself, a prince of the blood, assumed the宰相 office with responsibility and assumed the high confidence of virtually all the conservative and those who followed him. His cabinet included such men as the Minister of the military forces and organizations and the Minister of War, the Minister of Home Affairs YAMAZAKI was chairman because of his wide and charge of all officials connected with the general police. HIGASHIKUNI is believed to have been instrumental in the time when he was reported by the Japanese to be a confidential adviser to Yamagata. Apparently he has facile access to the conservative political leaders in the conservative and from him to other conservative Japanese business or organizations which undoubtedly influence the military.

2. HIGASHIKUNI is supposed to be close to YOSHIDA and his "Yoshida" echoes the YOSHIDA "line" on rearmament, viz., gradual approach. It is believed that like YOSHIDA he has an inherent distrust of the military personnel and is more cautious than YOSHIDA about speeding up rearmament efforts. His major concern with this problem seems to be the attitudes of Japan's neighbors. He repeatedly stressed the harmful effects that could result if Japan, particularly in order to avoid exacerbating post war feelings in neighboring countries by an open return to a strong military position.

3. He was very definite in expressing the view that U.S. leaders should not speak openly or forcefully about the need for Japanese defense, but rather let the older and middle-aged Japanese handle the problem in their own fashion. In this connection the Reporting Officer does NOT subscribe to such view; on the contrary, this Reporter believes that it is propitious for U.S. leaders to take cognizance openly and frankly of Japan's need to recognize her obligations for self defense. While the obvious challenges of American interference in Japanese affairs can be

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expected from disloyal elements whenever there is responsible U.S. public comment on Japanese rearmament, it is my conviction that until some basis for urgency to "act" is inculcated into the hearts of Japan's government, they will procrastinate in instituting a constructive defense program with attendant costs because of political expediency and leave the U.S. to struggle with the realistic aspects of defending Japan. This Reporter ~~does~~ subscribes to HIGASHIMURA's idea that local U.S. representatives should personally and informally encourage local leaders in government and private circles in their efforts to reorient government, but believes such efforts should supplement open U.S. policy and not serve as the sole means of propounding such policy. Endeavors to cooperate with the Japanese in achieving a sound moral and practical objective by dexterous devices peculiar to Oriental psychology stand little chance of success. An approach of this nature is not properly a matter for Japanese handling after basic issues have been clearly defined.

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